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ABSTRACT

Despite U.S. world leadership in research in child healthcare and development, in all the statistical indicators of children's well-being the United States lags well behind most advanced industrialized societies. This book discusses U.S. public policy issues concerning the healthcare and development of children under age three. Studies are cited which compared the physical, educational, and behavioral development of children in the United States with those in Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom. The results showed that U.S. children lag behind children in most industrialized nations. Child and family policy experts Sheila B. Kamerman and Alfred J. Kahn present strategies such as institution of child tax credits, expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act, improved maternity benefits, stricter enforcement of needed immunizations, and other family support programs designed to improve infant and toddler care in this country. The financial costs of developing and implementing programs that would improve children's early years are also discussed. The research and conclusions are outlined in the book's eight chapters: (1) Starting Right: The First Three Years; (2) Developing a Strategy; (3) Toward Economic Security; (4) Time For Parenting; (5) A Healthy Start; (6) Infant and Toddler Care and Education; (7) Family Support Services: Helping Parents To Be Better Parents; and (8) Getting Started On Starting Right. Notes on each chapter are included, and charts of currency exchange rates are appended. (JA)

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